



# Statement from Karen Hacker, MD, MPH, Director of CDC’s NCCDPHP, on Extended Growth Charts for Children and Adolescents with Severe Obesity

**Media Statement**

For Immediate Release: December 15, 2022

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CDC released today new, extended growth charts for assessing growth and treatment of children with severe obesity. As a clinician, I encourage healthcare providers to use the extended growth charts as a tool when working with children and adolescents with severe obesity. Intervening early is critical to improving the health of our children as they grow into adults.

Prior to today’s release, the growth charts did not extend high enough to plot BMI for the increasing number of children with severe obesity. The new growth charts coupled with high-quality treatment can help optimize care for children with severe obesity.

Childhood obesity is a serious and increasing problem in the United States. The [Extended BMI-for-Age Growth Charts](#) allow clinicians to track growth and visualize high BMI percentiles with families. This can help optimize care for children and adolescents aged 2 – 19 with severe obesity. Severe obesity is defined as a BMI greater than or equal to 120% of the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile on BMI-for-Age growth charts.

Providers can work with families on a comprehensive care plan to address childhood obesity. Safe and effective treatment options include Family Healthy Weight Programs, which are comprehensive behavioral treatment programs, and additional evidence-based medical treatment.

Existing growth charts for children and adolescents without obesity will not change. These extended growth charts can replace current severe obesity growth charts in Electronic Health Records. They will be useful for anyone treating severe childhood obesity.

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